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Curriculum innovation in primary schools

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Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court

Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.wales

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Introduction

This survey report is in response to a request for advice on curriculum change in the primary sector from the Welsh Government in the Cabinet Secretary's annual remit letter to Estyn for 2016-2017. The report is aimed at the Welsh Government, local authorities and regional consortia. The report's findings and the associated case studies will also be of interest to headteachers and staff in primary schools when they reflect on their current curriculum provision and plan for curriculum change. The four stages of curriculum development will be of interest to headteachers and staff in other school sectors.

The report draws on evidence from a sample of primary schools visited between January and July 2017. Inspectors considered how the schools are adapting their curriculum in the light of current curriculum and education reforms. It provides an overview of how primary schools currently evaluate, plan, deliver, monitor and refine their curriculum and teaching approaches.

The report links to 20 case studies from individual primary schools across Wales. You can find the detailed case studies by following the links provided on page 15 below. The case studies show how primary schools are adapting their curriculum arrangements as they respond to the challenge of meeting the new curriculum outlined in *Successful Futures* (Donaldson, 2015). They provide examples of how schools that are at different stages of curriculum development are exploring new curricular approaches and associated teaching strategies.

In undertaking the survey, inspectors interviewed school leaders regarding the quality of teaching and assessment, curriculum planning, curricular and extra-curricular learning experiences, staff development and leadership matters. They focused on three key questions:

- How are schools evaluating their curriculum to determine what needs to change to realise a new Curriculum for Wales?
- How are schools responding to evaluation outcomes to plan and develop a curriculum that is engaging and attractive, one that develops an ability and enthusiasm to apply knowledge and skills independently?
- How are leaders monitoring change and taking their work to the next step?

During the survey, leaders shared their experiences openly and discussed the impact that support and guidance offered through various professional learning events, networks, working groups, and partnerships are having on curriculum development. These professional learning opportunities included schools as learning organisations working groups, school-to-school collaboration arrangements, guidance from local authorities and consortia, and opportunities to consult with the Welsh Government.

Background

In 2014, the Minister for Education and Skills asked Professor Donaldson to conduct a review of curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales from the foundation phase to key stage 4. The resulting report, *Successful Futures* (Donaldson, 2015), outlines proposals for a new curriculum that builds on the existing strengths of Welsh education. The report identifies four purposes that provide a starting point for a new Curriculum for Wales:

- ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives
- enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work
- ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world
- healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society

The Donaldson report recognises that the four purposes will ‘inevitably require a wide repertoire of teaching and learning approaches’ and that there is a ‘fundamental interdependency between the purposes of the curriculum and pedagogy’ (Donaldson, 2015, pp.63-64).

In 2014, the Organisation for Economic and Cultural Development (OECD) published a comprehensive review of education in Wales (*‘Improving schools in Wales: an OECD perspective’*). The report provided a series of recommendations to strengthen the education system over the long term. The report noted that schools were facing challenges in implementing a range of policies and frameworks, and that the scale of reform over a short timescale meant that only partial implementation of some policies was occurring. The OECD published a follow up report in 2017 entitled, *‘The Welsh Education Reform Journey: A rapid policy assessment’*. This report ‘analyses the reforms adopted since 2014 and offers recommendations to inform next steps’ (OECD, 2017, p.7).

Since 2017, a few schools across Wales have worked with the OECD to develop an all-Wales model of schools as learning organisations (SLO) based on the 2016 report *‘What makes a school a learning organisation?’* (Kools & Stoll, 2016). This report summarises some of the main findings of the OECD-UNICEF education working paper (OECD, 2016). The resulting model, *‘Schools in Wales as learning organisations’* (Welsh Government, 2017) sets out a framework with seven dimensions, highlighting how schools can develop as a learning organisation by:

1. developing and sharing a vision centered on the learning of all students
2. creating and supporting continuous learning opportunities for all staff
3. promoting team learning and collaboration among all staff
4. establishing a culture of inquiry, innovation and exploration
5. embedding systems for collecting and exchanging knowledge and learning
6. learning with and from the external environment and larger learning system
7. modelling and growing learning leadership

The SLO model includes a questionnaire where school staff can self-evaluate against the seven dimensions outlined above. Information from the questionnaires can then be used to inform improvement planning. Schools that develop as learning organisations often have the capacity to change and adapt routinely to new environments and circumstances and will be able to support the implementation of a new Curriculum for Wales.

What is working well?

The schools have an enabling ethos where staff have a positive attitude to change and innovation

- 1 Nearly all of the schools visited take a positive approach to revising their school's curriculum. Leaders in most of the schools visited talk enthusiastically about developing an integrated approach to learning that focuses on providing engaging opportunities for pupils to acquire and develop skills and knowledge. Many talk confidently about embracing 'the four purposes' (Donaldson, 2015) and have a good understanding of how national priorities, such as the Welsh language, and health and wellbeing, can be developed through the four purposes. Many of these leaders engage well with pupils, staff, parents and governors to develop a shared vision for their new curriculum.
- 2 In a majority of these schools, headteachers have created a culture where teachers are developing the confidence to change their current approach to the curriculum. In these schools, there is an emerging ethos of sharing, experimentation and support among staff who evaluate their own performance and learn from setbacks or initial challenges. Leaders encourage teachers to try out new ways of delivering lessons and learning experiences without fear of failure. A minority of headteachers actively support teachers to research their own practices, and this facilitates curriculum development.
- 3 In many of the schools visited, the key areas that contribute to a successful ethos and culture that supports professional learning include:
 - developing a common understanding and an agreed language of learning that all staff use to inform discussion of key concepts and activities in the school
 - encouraging open and direct dialogue about teaching and practice with a strong focus on its impact on learners
 - building collaborative and supportive professional relationships within and between schools
 - engaging with research evidence and carrying out research
 - recognising a collective responsibility for improvement
 - adopting a genuine open-door culture in classrooms that contributes towards creating trust, transparency and honesty among staff
- 4 Most headteachers and senior leaders of the schools visited understand the need to develop strong leadership and vision so that schools adopt a long-term strategy to support curriculum development and improvement. Nearly all headteachers set high expectations and promote effective and challenging teaching that meets the needs of all learners. They invest in highly-trained support staff and ensure continuous professional development at all career stages. Planning staff development, recruitment and succession is based on robust evaluation processes.

The schools focus sharply on designing learning experiences that harness the curiosity and creativity of pupils and support risk-taking and pupils' independent learning

- 5 Headteachers at many of the schools visited encourage their staff to plan activities that harness pupils' curiosity and creativity, and are interesting, enjoyable, relevant and challenging for pupils. Most leaders understand that excellent teaching and effective pedagogy improve and sustain pupil achievement. In these schools, leaders view curriculum development as a vehicle to support the improvement of teaching. They provide regular opportunities for teachers who have a particular subject strength or interest to collaborate with and support colleagues to improve their practice.
- 6 Most schools have introduced worthwhile cross-curricular activities that allow teachers to consider how they provide for developing the four purposes through well-planned activities. Leaders in nearly all of the schools visited have adopted a clear definition and understanding of what constitutes a strong, innovative curriculum, although the expectations of senior leaders vary between schools.
- 7 Teachers in these schools provide regular opportunities for pupils to take measured risks in their learning, through exploring their thoughts and tackling challenging activities without fear of failure. These activities are well planned and include a suitable balance of pupil-led and adult-led learning opportunities with links across subjects and skills. They understand the importance of inclusion, value all pupils, whatever their ability, and support them along individual learning pathways.

Most schools have a clear focus on delivering teaching of high quality allied to an improved curriculum

- 8 In most of the schools visited, leaders have a clear understanding of the importance of developing a shared awareness of what effective teaching looks like. They ensure that teachers reflect on their professional practice and evaluate its impact on pupils' progress. Many school leaders support teachers to evaluate the way they teach. They encourage teachers to consider new ways of motivating pupils to explore and discover for themselves by setting their own targets. "In the best schools, practitioners work together to develop agreed whole-school approaches and expectations regarding classroom practice." (Estyn, 2018, p.18)
- 9 Leaders emphasise the need for teachers to develop the confidence and understanding to choose the most appropriate teaching approach to challenge, inspire and meet the needs of all pupils. Senior management teams in a minority of schools have made opportunities for teachers to collaborate in teams, often in 'triads' that include individuals with different teaching experiences and expertise. Each member of the group takes it in turn to observe another teaching before engaging in a frank and open discussion focusing on pedagogy. This useful and positive approach of developing teachers' skills helps to improve performance. Teachers focus on general principles, such as behaviour management strategies, and the extent to which pupils play an equally active role in the learning process. These schools are developing a culture of critical reflection that informs the training needs of individuals. They develop an understanding of pedagogy through "self-evaluation processes that routinely focus on the quality of teaching and learning". (Estyn, 2018, p.18)

- 10 Many leaders in the schools visited use the school as learning organisation model (OECD, 2016) to ensure that their teachers reflect on and refine the effectiveness of teaching. They identify that inspirational teaching leads to engaged and motivated pupils who are self-directed in their learning and have more control over their learning. Most leaders develop 'ambitious, capable learners' (Donaldson, 2015) by encouraging teachers to provide valuable opportunities for pupils to manage their own learning. They do this by allowing them to respond to the challenges and difficulties that arise themselves and resist the temptation to intervene and direct the learning. Pupils work through difficulties and do not rely on someone else being there to solve problems for them.
- 11 Senior leaders often use a range of simple but effective questions to encourage teachers to reflect on the curriculum and their teaching. The focus of the questions is on creating opportunities for pupils to develop their own interests and to undertake challenging tasks by employing a blend of approaches, including those that promote problem-solving, creative and critical thinking. They ask themselves questions such as the following:
- How do I engage my pupils' interest to ensure that they know the purpose of the activity?
 - How do I inspire pupils to be ambitious, capable and creative learners?
 - How do I develop pupils as independent learners who take increasing responsibility for their own learning and respond confidently to difficulties or challenges?
 - How do I know what prior skills, knowledge and understanding my pupils already have?
 - How do I ensure that I have the correct balance between support and challenge in the tasks I set pupils?
 - How do I know what core skills my pupils are or should be developing?
 - How do I provide opportunities for my pupils to apply their skills across all areas of learning?
 - How do I provide opportunities for my pupils to work collaboratively on their own challenges so that they take risks and go beyond the conventional approach?
- 12 A few schools already ensure that teachers plan regular activities that address at least one of the four purposes through effective pedagogy. However, it is too soon to measure the impact of this detailed planning on pupils' ability to acquire and develop key skills.
- 13 Around half of schools visited have undertaken a thorough analysis of the quality of their teaching. Nearly all of them have acquired a good understanding of their strengths and areas for development and how they can become inspiring teachers. Leaders make comprehensive use of lesson observations, book scrutiny with pupils, and regular learning walks to obtain a baseline for an assessment of the quality of teaching. They then provide teachers with valuable feedback that has a clear focus on providing opportunities for pupils to apply their skills across all areas of learning.
- 14 Teachers in the schools visited often employ a range of teaching strategies and recognise that there is no single approach that suits all situations and groups of

pupils. When planning activities, they consider different approaches that might help individual pupils to learn more effectively. Nearly all place a strong emphasis on developing independent learners who take increasing responsibility for their own learning. Many lessons include regular opportunities for pupils to research, observe, record, experiment, develop ideas, imagine and create. However, these opportunities are often stand-alone activities and do not contribute to an integrated curriculum that is rooted in effective pedagogy.

Schools provide opportunities for teachers to improve their skills through effective pedagogy

- 15 Many schools have a strong culture of professional learning and place significant emphasis on improving the quality of teaching and learning. To do this, they develop an inclusive ethos and collaborative culture where professional learning is valued by all staff and a range of professional learning activities are available to support improvement.
- 16 When necessary, leaders address aspects of teaching that need to improve through training and professional learning. This approach enables teachers to learn about and try out different strategies with different groups of pupils according to ability, age and development. Such practical opportunities to develop effective pedagogy in these schools include:
 - observing and evaluating lessons with other teachers in ‘triads’ – either with colleagues or teachers from partner schools
 - observing filmed lessons as a whole-school activity
 - visiting other schools in a range of sectors to observe good practice
 - teaching other classes, either in their own school or in partner schools

The schools focus on change and innovation as drivers to improve the educational experiences of pupils

- 17 In most schools, leaders understand the need to improve educational experiences for all pupils. They focus well on developing effective teaching practices and assessment procedures as the fundamental principles necessary to establish a strong and innovative curriculum. Most headteachers provide regular opportunities for staff to develop their knowledge and understanding of these principles through a programme of carefully structured meetings and workshops. Many ensure that staff are confident to try out new approaches that inspire pupils to learn and succeed. There is a strong belief that every initiative or development should be evaluated to assess its impact on the learner and on improvements in pupils’ experiences, learning and outcomes. This ‘can do’ attitude and a strong culture of professional learning make these schools well placed to create a curriculum that meets the needs of their learners.
- 18 Many teachers at the schools visited have performance management objectives that support curriculum development. In these schools, leaders ensure that teachers focus well on providing valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their independence skills and their ability to make choices and think creatively. Leaders monitor these annual objectives carefully to ensure that teachers evaluate pupils’

achievement and progress accurately and plan the next steps in their learning. These objectives support the development of a flexible curriculum and effective pedagogy.

There is growing recognition of the value and impact of educational research

- 19 Since the publication of Successful Futures (Donaldson 2015), there have been significant changes in the way in which teachers and school leaders access and engage with educational research to inform curriculum development. Through regional consortia, the Welsh Government and the Education Workforce Council (EWC), there are useful and effective mechanisms for schools to access up-to-date educational research and participate in forums to debate the curriculum and assessment.
- 20 Teachers are more confident, discerning and creative where their practice is rooted in understanding what works well. Estyn's Annual Report (2016-2017) notes that 'in schools that use existing research evidence regularly, teachers evaluate theories about teaching and learning, and apply them to their own practice' (Estyn, 2018, p.20). In these instances, teachers often introduce interesting and worthwhile activities into their curriculum because they have read about them in their research or through participation in seminars or shared practice with other teachers.
- 21 However, opportunities for schools to be involved in research remain too variable overall and, in a minority of instances, leaders and teachers feel out of touch with key research developments.

Many of the schools have strong self-evaluation practices and know what aspects of teaching and learning need to change

- 22 Leaders in the schools visited recognise the need for self-evaluation that focuses on teaching and learning. Many schools evaluate the extent to which their current curriculum includes worthwhile opportunities for teachers to embed the four purposes. Leaders consider how different pedagogical styles capture and engage pupils' interests through a wider variety of learning experiences. In these schools, leaders are developing an innovative curriculum that builds on current effective provision and pedagogy. They emphasise providing regular opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and dispositions through formal and informal experiences.
- 23 However, a minority of school leaders do not evaluate their current provision rigorously enough. As a result, they are not in a strong position to identify what aspects of teaching and learning need to be amended and improved.

Many schools have engaged actively with staff, pupils, parents and governors about how they would like the curriculum in their school to change

- 24 In the better schools, leaders engage with pupils, staff and parents to obtain a well-balanced overview of their current curriculum. They have also gathered stakeholders' views and opinions about what they feel constitutes a pioneering curriculum by asking how they would like the curriculum to be developed further. The

following questions are typical of those used to stimulate discussion among staff, pupils, parents and governors:

- What will excite our pupils and engage them in their learning?
- What experiences should we provide for our pupils so that they develop into creative, enterprising and imaginative learners who are not afraid of taking measured risks?
- Where should we teach our pupils, and where do they learn best?
- How can we know if our pupils are making progress and that their work is improving?
- Who should we invite into the school to work with our pupils? Why? Are we clear about the benefits?
- Where should we take our pupils to provide real-life experiences that will allow them to become knowledgeable about their culture, community, society and the world, now and in the past?
- How can we provide opportunities for pupils to be ambitious, capable learners who use digital technologies creatively to communicate, ask questions and solve problems in both Welsh and English?
- How should we develop our pupils' understanding of mental and emotional wellbeing?

What are the barriers to change?

- 25 Many of the primary schools visited show evidence of useful preparatory work for curriculum development. A minority have re-organised staff into areas of learning and experiences (AoLE) teams, working together on developing subject areas or mapping out how current themes can be taught using an AoLE approach. Many schools have begun to develop their provision for wellbeing across the curriculum. However, many of these schools are not yet in a position to evaluate the extent to which these activities are having an impact on standards.

Insufficient curriculum planning

- 26 In a few of the schools visited, the curriculum lacks coherence and has become over-crowded, disjointed or patchy. Although schools are moving towards more 'real-life' contexts and teachers' planning is linking up pupils' different learning experiences better, there is still too much emphasis on stand-alone projects or bolted-on elements to the curriculum rather than a fully integrated approach to curriculum planning.
- 27 Many primary schools teach mathematics and language in the morning and thematic or topic work in the afternoons. This arrangement often leads to disjointed planning where pupils' work in the morning does not relate closely enough to what they do in the afternoon.
- 28 Many teachers have renamed themes and topics that relate to the new areas of learning and experiences. For example, a few primary schools are retaining topics that relate to the current National Curriculum, such as Superheroes, Tudors, and the Great Fire of London. However, only a few schools choose themes that develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of history and culture of Wales.

Inconsistent skills development

- 29 A minority of schools do not monitor how well teachers use a suitable range of teaching approaches to ensure that pupils develop their literacy, numeracy and digital competence skills across the curriculum.
- 30 Many schools have arrangements to implement the literacy and numeracy framework (Welsh Government, 2013) and plan opportunities to develop genres of writing through cross-curricular work. However, this work often repeats what has been taught in language lessons and does not always develop pupils' skills in a meaningful context. In a minority of schools, teachers do not provide regular, worthwhile opportunities for pupils to develop their problem-solving, creative and critical thinking skills.
- 31 A majority of the schools visited in the survey are beginning to consider how they include elements of the digital competence framework through appropriate thematic work.

Waiting for guidance

- 32 There are a few schools that have made only tentative steps in developing the curriculum, as they are waiting for definitive guidance and direction from the Welsh Government before committing to deep-rooted change. In a minority of schools visited, leaders and teachers require additional support on how to evaluate their current policies on teaching methods and curriculum content. The progress of these schools has been too slow or in a few cases changes have moved too quickly.

Pioneer schools and collaboration

- 33 Since autumn 2015, most pioneer schools have worked in partnership with the Welsh Government and regional consortia to develop a new Curriculum for Wales. The pioneer school programme is supported by nearly all leaders and teachers. It encourages schools to work together and makes good use of individuals' professional knowledge and expertise to design and develop the new curriculum.
- 34 Most of the pioneer schools visited work closely with their partner schools, but they are uncertain about how much they are expected to collaborate with each other. Very few collaborate with others to evaluate the appropriateness of current teaching practices and whether they are well placed to deliver the four purposes of Successful Futures (Donaldson, 2015).
- 35 Most pioneer schools have focused on delivering aspects of the AoLEs. However, they have not considered well enough the way teachers deliver their lessons or the impact of teaching approaches on pupils' learning and achievement.

Not involving parents and the community

- 36 Many schools consulted with parents and the community during initial preparations for curriculum change. However, consultation happens less often when schools move onto detailed curriculum planning and parents are often left unsighted of developments. In a few schools, curriculum development has proceeded too quickly, and changes to the curriculum are not always communicated to parents and the wider community.

Four stages of curriculum development

- 37 The curriculum development self-evaluation model below has been developed in consultation with schools, the Welsh Government and regional consortia. The questions posed also take account of the key findings and recommendations from the two OECD reports outlined above (OECD, 2014 & OECD, 2017) as well as scrutiny of Estyn inspection reports.

Stage 1: Evaluating the current curriculum within wider self-evaluation arrangements

- 38 When **evaluating the current curriculum**, schools may consider the following key questions:
- Have you developed effective self-evaluation arrangements to identify what you are doing well and what needs to change?
 - What evidence do you need to consider and who do you need to involve, to evaluate teaching and curriculum planning?
 - To what extent do you promote the four purposes in your current curriculum arrangements?
 - How well do you provide a wide range of enrichment experiences for pupils and recognise their achievements?
 - How do you ensure that pupils build well on what they have learnt as they go through the school or between schools?
 - Are assessment arrangements appropriate and how well do they help pupils improve their own work?
 - How well do you evaluate the effectiveness of your strategic partnerships and community involvement in the curriculum?
 - To what extent are you ready to embrace change and engage with other schools and partners to develop your curriculum?
 - How well do you use staff knowledge, skills and understanding when planning for improvement?

Stage 2: Planning and preparing for change

- 39 When **planning and preparing for change**, schools may consider the following key questions:

Leadership

- Do leaders have a clear vision for what to change and why?
- Have leaders established the right culture and conditions for change? How do you know?
- Have leaders developed a strong professional learning culture that focuses on developing effective pedagogy?
- Are there effective systems to pilot new ideas prior to implementation?
- How well do leaders support and encourage staff to try new ideas?
- How well do leaders maintain and develop staff's knowledge and understanding of new curriculum developments?

Researching

- How well do staff use first-hand evidence to inform curriculum development?
- How well do you ensure that the changes you propose will provide and sustain rich contexts for developing the four purposes outlined in Successful Futures (Donaldson, 2015)?
- Do you factor sufficient time to raise awareness of curriculum change?
- Do you provide sufficient opportunities for staff to debate research findings in preparation for change?

Resourcing

- How well do you ensure that you will have the required resources in place to support any proposed curriculum change?
- How well do you use your staff's existing creativity and expertise to enable others to develop their imagination in relation to the curriculum?
- What are the implications for staffing and resources?

Stakeholder involvement

- To what extent do you have a culture that supports working with other schools and partners?
- How well do you engage with staff, pupils, parents and the governing body to prepare for curriculum change?
- How do you ensure that staff and other stakeholders (for example parents and governors) know where to find the latest curriculum information so that they are all involved in preparing for change?
- Are partnerships based on equality of relationships and opportunities for mutual learning?

Professional learning

- To what extent have you received support from partners or pioneer schools to implement change?
- How well do staff collaborate, learn and exchange knowledge with peers in other schools through networks and/or school-to-school collaborations?
- To what extent do staff gain skills and understanding to develop and implement a new curriculum?
- How well do you prioritise professional learning and protect time for staff to engage with appropriate activities?
- How well do you utilise skills, knowledge and understanding of all staff to plan for improvement and change?
- Have you identified any possible barriers to change? For example:
 - staff development needs
 - insufficient time or weak leadership
 - conflicting demands of other educational initiatives
 - the capacity for new or inexperienced teachers to cope with the demands of a new curriculum
 - reluctance of teachers comfortable with familiar approaches to change
- Have you effective procedures in place to evaluate your school's external environment to respond quickly to challenges and opportunities?

Stage 3: Realising change

40 When **realising change**, schools may consider the following key questions:

- How well do you monitor specific aspects of the curriculum that you have identified as needing to be changed or refined?
- What approaches or curriculum changes have been adopted and how effective have they been to date?
- How well do you support and enable changes to the curriculum?
- How well do you monitor the impact of new teaching approaches or strategies that you have adopted?
- How well do you know how effective they are?
- How well do you introduce these changes?
 - Do you adopt a whole school approach?
 - Do you focus on individual classes or key stages?
 - Do you focus on specific aspects of the curriculum, subjects, or areas of learning?
- How well do you recognise main barriers to change and how do you address and overcome them?
- How well do staff and partners (for example pupils, parents and governors) support the realisation of change?

Stage 4: Evaluating change

41 When **evaluating change**, schools may consider the following key questions:

- How well do you evaluate change to consider what is working well and what isn't, and why?
- How effectively do you monitor, review and adapt change in Stage 3? Do you involve all stakeholders?
- How well do you evaluate the impact of change in order to identify what needs to happen next and plan for further improvement?
- How well do you know which aspects require strengthening or more piloting before implementing them fully?
- How effective are your arrangements for systematic feedback and how well do you use your evaluation of all aspects of curriculum development from a range of perspectives, to plan future activities and change?
- How well do you consider the impact of different pedagogy to raise standards of teaching?

A summary of these [questions is available](#).

Case studies

- 42 The case studies that can be accessed here include schools across Wales of various sizes, levels of deprivation, and language medium. For each case study, we considered:
- the approach the school adopted to evaluating their current curriculum
 - the successes
 - the challenges
 - how the schools has overcome or is addressing these challenges
- 43 The case studies reflect that schools across Wales are at various points on a curriculum change 'continuum' as a result of their different starting-points, stages of development, and the specific circumstances of each school.
- 44 The case studies show how schools that are at different stages of curriculum development are making progress. They are organised around the four stages of curriculum development set out earlier in the report. The four stages offer schools a structure that can aid curricular thinking.

School	Stage 1: Self- evaluation	Stage 2: Planning and preparation	Stage 3: Realising change	Stage 4: Evaluating change
Ysgol Gynradd Cae Top	✓	✓		
Cornist Park C.P. School	✓	✓	✓	✓
Monnow Primary School	✓	✓	✓	
Undy C.P. School	✓	✓	✓	
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Lonlas	✓	✓		
Burry Port Community Primary	✓	✓	✓	✓
Penllergaer Primary School	✓	✓		
Ysgol Y Faenol	✓	✓		
Cwmfelinfach Primary School	✓	✓		

Bryn Deva C.P. School	✓	✓	✓	
Ysgol Y Dderi	✓	✓	✓	
Kitchener Primary School	✓	✓		
Glan Usk Primary School	✓	✓		
Radnor Valley C.P. School	✓	✓		
Ysgol Gymraeg Aberystwyth	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ysgol Heulfan	✓	✓	✓	
Ysgol Cynwyd Sant	✓	✓	✓	
Llanishen Fach Primary School	✓	✓	✓	
Barry Primary Schools cluster	✓	✓		
Hafod Primary School	✓	✓	✓	

Evidence base

The thematic survey draws on visits to 30 schools. It focuses on English-medium, Welsh-medium and bilingual schools from across Wales that are at different stages of curriculum development. Visits ensured a broadly proportional representation of primary schools in each region, and included pioneer schools.

The school visits took place between January and July 2017. During the visits, inspectors interviewed senior leaders, middle leaders, class teachers, learning support staff and pupils to capture all aspects of the school's curriculum development journey. Additional evidence was drawn from school inspection outcomes from September 2015 to July 2017.

Schools included in the survey:

- Cwmfelinfach Primary School
- Ysgol Gynradd Cae Top
- Bryn Deva C.P. School
- Ysgol Gymraeg Aberystwyth
- Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Teyrnnon
- Kitchener Primary School
- Ysgol Gymraeg Ifor Hael
- Severn Primary School
- Ysgol Y Faenol
- St Joseph's Primary School
- Ysgol Cynwyd Sant
- Cornist Park C.P. School
- Glan Usk Primary School
- Monnow Primary School
- Undy C.P. School
- Ysgol Melyd
- Ysgol Y Dderi
- Ysgol Emmanuel
- Burry Port Community Primary
- Cyfarthfa Park Primary School
- Barry Primary Schools cluster
- Ysgol Bryn Hedydd
- Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Lonlas
- Ysgol Ffridd y Llyn
- Ysgol Heulfan
- Radnor Valley C.P. School
- Penllergaer Primary School
- Ysgol Gynradd Peniel
- Llanishen Fach Primary School
- Hafod Primary School

Glossary

areas of learning and experience (AoLE)	Successful Futures refers to the development of six areas of learning and experience as a way of organising curriculum subjects. These are expressive arts, health and wellbeing, humanities, languages, literacy and communication, mathematics and numeracy, and science and technology.
digital competence framework	Digital competence is one of three cross-curricular responsibilities, alongside literacy and numeracy. It focuses on developing digital skills that can be applied to a wide range of subjects and scenarios.
Education Workforce Council (EWC)	The Education Workforce Council regulates School and Further Education Teachers in Wales in the interests of learners and the general public.
foundation phase	An approach to learning for children from three to seven years of age in Wales. It is the statutory curriculum for all children in Wales between these ages in both maintained and non-maintained settings.
learning walk	A formal or informal observation of teaching, provision or another aspect of school life, which is taking place in a classroom or other learning environment
Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF)	This is a skills framework developed by the Welsh Government. It became statutory in schools from September 2013. It is designed to help teachers embed literacy and numeracy into all subject areas (Welsh Government, 2013).
OECD	The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development is an intergovernmental economic organisation with 35 member countries, founded in 1961 to stimulate economic progress and world trade.
partner school	Schools working alongside pioneer schools to respond to the recommendations from Successful Futures
pedagogy	The method and practice of teaching
pioneer school	Schools that are currently working with the Welsh Government and other schools to develop and pilot a new curriculum for Wales.

regional consortia	The provision set up by a group of local authorities to deliver school improvement services as set out in the Welsh Government's National Model for Regional Working
schools as learning organisations (SLO)	A learning organisation is a place where the beliefs, values and norms of employees are brought to bear to support sustained learning.

Numbers – quantities and proportions

nearly all =	with very few exceptions
most =	90% or more
many =	70% or more
a majority =	over 60%
half =	50%
around half =	close to 50%
a minority =	below 40%
few =	below 20%
very few =	less than 10%

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